

THE HOME OF AMERICUS

A Visit to an Estancia Where Was Raised the Bull That Sold for Thirty-Five Thousand Gold Dollars

Contains 32,000 Acres and Has Thousands of Pedigreed Cattle—A Look at the Stables and Their Famous Durhams, Herefords and Polled Angus Stock—A Two-Year-Old Cow Worth \$15,000 and a Ten-Day-Old Calf Which Would Easily Sell for \$2,000—How the Estate Is Kept—Its Wonderful Park—Its Owner Has 80,000 Cattle—Other Great Estates—La Chapadmalal, Where 28,000 Sheep Are Shorn By Machinery in Two Weeks.

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LA PLATA, Argentina. Have you ever heard of San Juan? It is the famous estancia belonging to the sons of Leonardo Pereyra, on which was bred the Shorthorn bull Americus, that sold at auction in Buenos Aires a year or so ago for \$35,000 in gold. That was the highest price ever paid for any bull anywhere upon earth and it gives one some idea of the value of the stock now on the estate.

The estancia lies on the Rio de la Plata, almost on the edge of this city, and within an hour's ride of Buenos Aires, the capital of the Argentine Republic. It runs for nine miles along the river and extends far back into the country. It contains 32,000 acres of as good pasture land as any in Kentucky, and this is divided up into fields of 100 acres or more, upon which are now feeding some of the finest bred cattle of the world.

The founder of the estate, Senor Pereyra, was the first to realize the importance of high-class pedigree stock and he began to found his herd of Durhams as far back as 1857, when he imported the bull Defiance and the cow Coral. The next year he bought the famous bull Don Juan and the cow Dahlia, and later on other short-horns which stand high in stock-breeding history. He has Herefords with pedigrees which date back for fifty years, since he imported their ancestors from England, and he has Lincoln and Rambouillet sheep that have won silver cups all over this country at the great fairs.

The estate now has on it more than 6,000 cows of fine blood and hundreds of pedigree bulls. It is used largely as a breeding establishment to supply the other great ranches belonging to the family, where there are altogether something like 80,000 cows, and from which are sold every year 18,000 fat steers.

I do not know just how much land the Pereyra family owns. The amount runs high into the tens of thousands of acres, and their stock exceeds the wildest ambitions of any Job, past or present. The San Juan estancia is their chief breeding farm. It is also where the family lives during the summer, and there were forty of them there at the time of my visit.

San Juan is one of the most beautiful estates in this land of millionaire farmers. I have spent the greater part of the day going over it. The railroad station lies almost at the gates, and the house is approached through wide avenues of magnificent trees. Senor Pereyra sent his majordomo to meet me, and I was driven in a coach drawn by two blooded horses for an hour or more through a mighty park, planted by the family. This park consists of a eucalyptus forest, the trees of which are 100 feet high and as big around at the base as a horsehead. There are other trees scattered among them, and here and there are great patches of wide open space covered with grass as high as your knee. Here a stream winds about through the forest, and there you find a lake over which hang great clumps of bamboo. Some of the avenues are lined with palms of many varieties. There are rustic bridges and islands covered with tropical verdure. At times I was reminded of some of the forests of Japan, and again of the wonderful gardens on the edge of Biskra in the Sahara, the same that Hichens took for the scene of his story "The Garden of Allah."

This part of the estate looks like a great English park. There are more than 750 acres in trees alone, and all of these have been planted by Senor Pereyra. I saw one pine tree which, with its branches, was fully fifty feet in diameter. It was brought as a sprig by the father of the family when he came from Europe about sixty years ago. It was one of the first trees planted upon the estate, and before that time the country was nothing but a plain covered with grass.

Now there are trees everywhere. They are planted in the fields as shade for the animals, 20,000 new trees being set out every year. Among these trees I saw a herd of deer feeding. There are something like 200 on the

estate, and they are all the offspring of a male and two females which the owner brought here some forty years ago.

As we rode over the farm we now and then scared up a wild ostrich. There are hundreds of them running about through the fields, and the majordomo says that in galloping after the cattle he now and then hears a splash and finds that the horse has run over a nest of large ostrich eggs.

I despair of being able to describe the fine stock. I am not a cattle breeder, and all that I say must be in the terms of the layman. The first herd we looked at consisted of fifty pedigree Herefords, ranging in age from three to eight years. Their average weight was about a ton, and they had never been fed on anything but grass. Several of them were prize cows, and others will go into the shows this year. I looked at one that weighed 2,500 pounds, and that, although she was only four years old. She seemed to be all meat, and when I pressed by thumb into her back it made hardly a dent. This cow's name was Lady Clare. Two of her calves have each sold for \$12,000.

I next photographed a two-year-old Durham cow. This animal weighed almost a ton, and it was perfect of its kind. Mr. Pereyra was offered \$15,000 in gold for it last year, but the sum was refused. I said to the majordomo that the young cow might yet bring more than Americus. He laughed and said that the price Americus brought was phenomenal and that that bulls like him were not sold every year.

Our next visit was to the stables, where the fine bulls are kept. There are five of these stables, each covering perhaps half an acre. They are are long low buildings divided up into great box stalls with an aisle running through the center. The floors are all of brick but the animals stand upon boards which are carpeted with bedding about a foot deep. The doors to the stalls slide on wheels and everything is of the most modern style. There are perhaps thirty bulls in each stable, but the ventilation is perfect, and as I went through there was no smell from the cattle. The animals are washed and scrubbed every morning, and before they enter the shows they are treated to a special lotion of hair restorer that makes their coats shine like satin. The animals are cared for like so many kings, each bull having its own private stall about fifteen or twenty feet square.

At my request the majordomo had some of the bulls led out, that I might photograph them. The great animals waddled as they walked. None less than a ton, and every one was of royal blood. Among others, were two sons of the bull that sold for \$35,000. One of these was eighteen months old. It was twice as big as the better class Shorthorn of the same size in the States.

Others of the stables were devoted to fine Hereford stock. Altogether there are about 200 bulls, every one of which has a pedigree longer than any genealogy in the historical collections of Boston.

As I walked through the stables, I saw a little male calf sucking a cow. The calf was only ten days old. It was not as big as a Newfoundland dog, but it was a perfect Durham in shape. When I asked as to his value, the majordomo told me that it was worth at least \$2,000. It is the son of the famous Americus, and it may turn out to be a prize winner and bring as much or more than its father. Nevertheless, today it is so small that I could have lifted it up in my arms. It is probably the most valuable piece of veal upon record.

As I rode from herd to herd through the great fields and looked at these animals I was surprised at their tameness. Both bulls and cows could be approached and handled without danger, and at one time I put my arms around the neck of a prize cow, and so standing, had my photograph taken. These cattle are never sworn at, nor in any way roughly treated, and a child can go into the stall of any one of the bulls without danger.

In one stable I was shown the candidates for the great show in 1916. These include both Herefords and Durhams. There are perhaps 100 of them, ranging in age from two months up to two and one-half years. Later on I saw the dairy. It contains scores of cows which have been bred by crossing the Holsteins with certain other breeds. In this way Mr. Pereyra has made a milking strain of his own. It is said to be superior to any other for Argentine use.

I next saw some of the sheep. There are thousands of them on the farm, and these include the finest of Lin-

coins, Rambouillets and Black-faces. All of the sheep are pedigreed, and in the sheep stables we saw some of the prize animals. They are kept in great pens under roofs. Each pen is about fifteen feet square, and there are about twenty sheep to the pen. There are also thoroughbred Angora goats.

During my visit I was driven out through the fields in which the fine breeding animals are kept. The fields are in squares and some of them are 170 acres in extent. They are so arranged that there is a well and a windmill for every four fields. The windmill is inside a ring and the gates from the field open into the ring so that the stock from each field can be kept separate when driven in for water. The arrangements are such that the estate can be handled with comparatively few men. It now employs only 200, but a larger number of these are taken up in the care of the stables and of the park and gardens and the service of the family. On some of Mr. Pereyra's other estancias, that have from 20,000 to 80,000 cattle, only one-third as many men are employed. There the cattle run about as they please, and the only thing to be done is to see that the fences are kept up and that nothing happens to the stock.

I asked as to wages, and the majordomo told me that the ordinary peons get forty Argentine dollars a month, and the headmen \$80. In addition they have their homes rent free on the estate, each family having from seven to ten acres of land for its own use, and some grain and corn for a few pigs and cows. Every family has two cows for milking, and it also receives an allowance of meat according to the size of the family. If the family is large this amount may be ten or twelve pounds per day, and if small only three or four pounds. Two animals are killed every day for the use of the estancia alone.

As we rode from field to field the majordomo told me how the cattle are sold on the estate. The agents of the great packing companies come out and the stock is brought forth in large herds. There may be a thousand in a single herd, and the buyer may take the whole thousand or he may select only seven or eight hundred. He buys what will make the best chilled beef and pays by weight. The average steer on the hoof will bring from 100 to 200 pesos, or from \$80 to \$160 of United States money.

As far as its fine stock is concerned, this estate of San Juan is one of the best of the republic. It is devoted rather to breeding than to the raising of beef, and the animals born here are shipped to the other estancias of the owner to improve the stock. Some of those estancias have thousands of cattle which run practically wild, and the only thing to be done is to look out and see if any be wounded or killed. The animals eat out of doors, and the meat is nearly clear profit. On some of the Pereyra farms they have large fields of alfalfa. There is one of twenty-seven square miles which is altogether alfalfa. It is used for stock raising.

In addition to the pedigree animals required for improving the stock, are those which are sold at the stock shows. The Pereyra herd has often led at such shows and it is now especially famous on account of Americans. That bull was born on the 15th of February, 1911. He was the son of Centennial Victor and Ravenswood III, and he has a pedigree running back to the fifteenth generation, his fifteenth great-grandfather in order of his birth being named Julius Caesar.

In addition to the Pereyra estancias there are many others in the republic that are famous for their fine cattle, horses and sheep. This is one of the chief grazing countries of the world and the farmers are steadily improving the stock. They are paying enormous prices for fine bulls and rams and have been spending fortunes in bringing in fine blooded stock from England and France. Take Manuel Cobo, who has an estate of 25,000 acres. He recently imported a bull named Rufus that cost him \$15,000 and he has several Durham and Hereford bulls that each cost from \$7,000 to \$10,000. At one time he imported a flock of 930 head of Lincoln sheep, from which he has sold one bull that brought \$11,000. He raises only pure-bred cattle and sheep and has on his estancia 500 pedigree shorthorn cattle, 40 shorthorn stock bulls and 10,000 pure bred Lincoln sheep. The Cobo estate has 80 windmills to water the stock, and it kills two bullocks and twenty sheep every day to feed the 200 men employed upon it.

Another big show estate is Le Chapadmalal, about eight hours by railway from Buenos Aires, near Mar del Plata, the most popular summer resort of the Argentine. It runs along the ocean for more than nine miles and extends about ten miles back from the sea, being in the shape of a pear with its head on the beach. This property belongs to Senor Martinez de Hoz, who, with his mother, has several hundred thousand acres in three or four different estates. One of his estancias is all in alfalfa, and upon it 8,000 steers are kept the year round, an average of 600 being sold every month. As to Chapadmalal, it is something like the estate I have

just visited, being noted for its prize stock and for the fine way in which they are kept. With the exception of about 5,000 acres devoted to grain, it is all in pasture, being divided up into camps, which are in turn subdivided into paddocks or fields. There is a driveway forty-five feet wide between the fields, and this space has been so planted to trees that every field is surrounded by shade.

Upon La Chapadmalal there are now 18,000 Durham cows, 2,500 horses and mares, and 38,000 sheep. The sheep are sheared by machinery, and the arrangements are such that the whole 38,000 can be shorn in two weeks. The owner looks upon his present flock as a small one, and it is only half the number he had a few years ago.

Senor Martinez de Hoz is a great lover of fine horses, and he breeds race horses here which he takes to London and runs there. He has a hunting box and residence in London, and at one time he ran a fashionable coach, keeping from forty to fifty Argentine-bred horses on the road. After a time the fad pulled upon him, and he sold out his horses at auction. They brought an average of \$450 apiece. He has now on his estate near Mar del Plata 100 pure-bred hackney mares, sixty pure-bred Shire mares and 160 mares used to breed polo ponies.

Among the other famous estates are those of the late General Roca, who was formerly President of the republic. He has one at La Larga, a night's ride from Buenos Aires, where his magnificent home is surrounded by a thousand-acre park, containing hundreds of thousands of trees, the most of which are only ten years old. The La Larga ranch comprises 140,000 acres, and of this 20,000 are in crops. Oats, corn and wheat are grown, but the oats are sown in the fall and the cattle are allowed to graze upon them. The most of the stock is Durham, and there are 30,000 head upon this big farm. There are also 20,000 Lincoln sheep and about 5,000 horses. The horses are mostly Percherons, crossed with the native stock. There are also thousands of ostriches of the South American breed. The latter feed out of doors, and live entirely on grass.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

TESLA'S LATEST DREAM.

"Wizard" Would Light Oceans and Continent at Will.
(New York Dispatch to the Philadelphia Ledger.)

Nikola Tesla scientist and inventor, said that he saw the end of war in the application of new principles of electrical construction he has discovered and with which he expects to revolutionize many of the activities of life, which read like a "Midsummer's Night Dream" of one touched with the Madstone, not the Philosopher's.

"Apparatus designed in accordance with invention, even if it be of small dimensions, is capable of transforming energy of tens of hundreds of thousands horsepower," said Mr. Tesla.

"The lighting of the ocean is only one of the less important results to be achieved by the use of this invention. I have planned many of the details of a plant which might be erected at the Azores and which would be amply sufficient to illuminate the entire ocean, so that such a disaster as that of the Titanic would not be repeated. The light would be soft and of very small intensity, but quite adequate to the purpose."

"A very timely application could just now be made in England, where a plant could be provided for illuminating London and the country in general at night to rob an attack by Zeppelins of its principal terrors. I have calculated that a plant of 75,000 horsepower would be required for the Azores, but much less power will do for the London application."

"One of the even more valuable uses to which this invention can be put is the transmission of the human voice or any kind of picture or image from one to any part of the globe, absolutely irrespective of distance."

"The employment of apparatus involving the same principles will give the power of man to precipitate rain, to draw unlimited quantities of water from the ocean. Lakes and rivers will be created in this manner, all the work being performed by the sun, men simply controlling the process."

"Perhaps the greatest results will be in the destruction of the atom and the release of its immense energy. The discovery will make the gun obsolete. The battles of the future will be fought with electrical waves. The destructive power under control will be so prodigious that on this account alone war will become an impossibility."

MULE'S HEEL HAS GOOD EYE.

(Iola, Kans., Dispatch to Kansas City Star.)

Manipulating his weapons of defense with wonderful dexterity, a Kansas mule yesterday kicked back a stone which Ben Wright, a Carlyle farmer, had thrown at the mule. The stone struck Wright's chin and severely injured him.

Workmen engaged on the bridge of the Oregon trunk line over the Crooked River climb a 300-foot rope ladder every day in reaching their work.